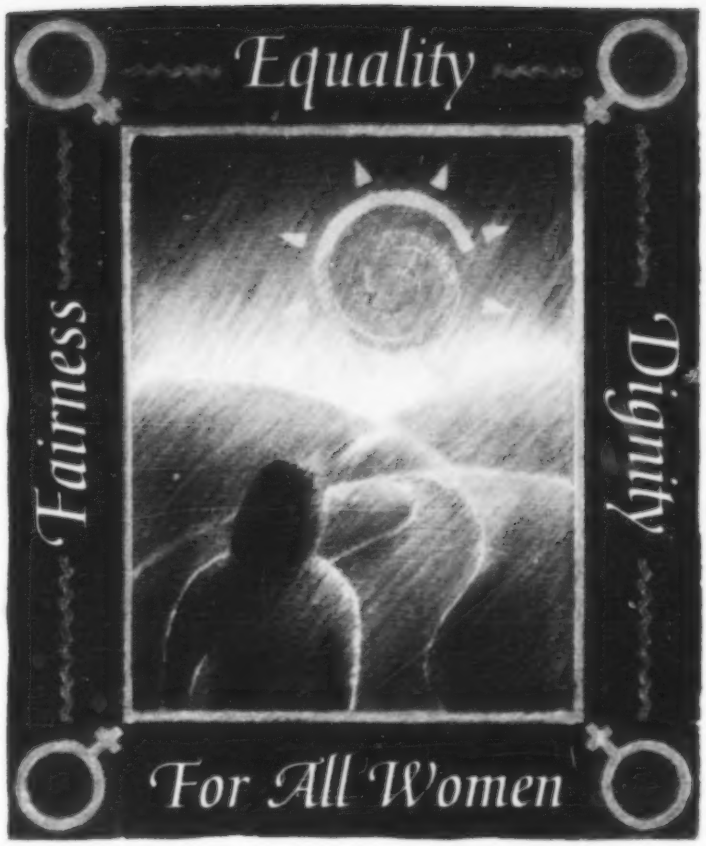
Nova Scotia
Advisory Council on
The Status of Women

Conseil consultatif sur la
condition féminine de la
Nouvelle-Écosse

An agency of the Province of Nova Scotia

Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2006-2007



The Journey Continues ...

Printed on paper that contains recycled fibre

Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2006-2007

Nova Scotia Advisory Council
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Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women for the year ended March 31, 2007 is prepared pursuant to the *Provincial Financial Act*, the *Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act*, 1977, c. 3, s. 6(1) and government policy and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's business plan information for the fiscal year 2006-2007. The reporting of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women management.

This accountability report is the responsibility of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's management and is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Council's business plan for the year.

Minister

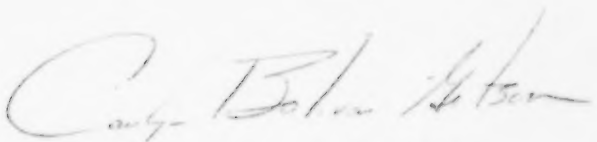
Chair

Message from the Minister

As the Advisory Council on the Status of Women heads into its 30th year, there's much progress to celebrate, and much work to do.

Partnerships such as the campaign school for women and the Healthy Balance Research Program go to the heart of improving women's lives – by increasing the number of women in decision-making and by supporting their health and well-being. Work to include women in trades, technology and science occupations continued this year. A new chapter for family and friends in the publication *Making Changes* -- a resource for women in abusive relationships -- adds a new level of help in addressing violence against women.

I am proud of the work of the Advisory Council and its partner organizations on these and other initiatives that make a difference in the lives of women and their families.



Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson
Minister

Message from the Chair

The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women has been working since 1977 to advance equality, fairness and dignity for all women in Nova Scotia. Arm-in-arm with experienced council members, high-performing staff and trusted partners in community and government – these relationships strengthen our efforts.

Moreover, partnerships with governments, academic institutions, community organizations and committees help us develop relevant and responsive research proposals and programs that allow us to participate in a range of community-based initiatives for educating and promoting the need for safer homes, streets and communities.

We need to work together to make the best life possible in Nova Scotia for our families and our communities. Council members and staff are working hard to do that.

Liz Chisholm, Chair

Introduction

The content of this accountability report is based on the goals, priorities and outcomes described in the Advisory Council's business plan for 2006-2007. The report describes the accomplishments and progress that the Advisory Council has made in meeting those goals and priorities.

The purpose of this report is to update the public, members of the legislative assembly and the Advisory Council's stakeholders, including women's equality-seeking groups and all women in the province, on Council's activities and accomplishments.

The report is structured around the agency's functions – policy and research, information and education, and community liaison and rural outreach – and the priorities for each function.

Background

The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women advises the provincial government on issues of interest and concern to women, and brings those issues forward. The mandate and powers of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women are set out in Section 4 of the *Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act*, which was passed in 1977. The mandate is:

- to advise the Minister upon such matters relating to the status of women as are referred to the Council for consideration by the Minister;

- to bring to the attention of the Minister matters of interest and concern to women.

The Council's powers are:

- to receive and hear petitions and suggestions concerning the status of women;
- to undertake and recommend research on matters relevant to the status of women;
- to recommend and participate in programs concerning the status of women;
- to propose legislation, policies and practices to promote equality of opportunity and status;
- to publish reports, studies and recommendations.

The Advisory Council keeps women's issues on the agenda of governments. The Minister responsible for the Status of Women appoints 10 to 12 women to the Advisory Council from all regions of the province. Council members stay in touch with women in their communities, identifying opportunities and needs for government action. Diversity is a hallmark of Council membership and action, as the Council seeks to be inclusive of all women in Nova Scotia. Council staff work on policy research, public education, and community liaison and outreach.

Mission, Goals and Core Functions

Mission

To advance equality, fairness and dignity for all women in Nova Scotia.

Goals

- To increase the participation of women in all their diversity in decisions that affect their lives, families and communities, with particular emphasis on those who face discrimination because of race, age, language, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or various forms of family status.
- To promote women's economic equality.
- To reduce violence against women in communities, workplaces and families.
- To improve the health and well-being of women and their families.

Core Functions

Policy and Research
The Council advises the Minister responsible for the Status of Women on the concerns and priorities of women, and formulates strategies and options to address these. The Council conducts quantitative and qualitative research in consultation with community groups, academic researchers, and government departments to ensure advice is a feasible, relevant, timely and accurate guide to government action.

Information and Education
The Council collects and disseminates information on women's issues to the Minister, Council, staff, and other key stakeholders, including the media and the general public. Through a comprehensive communications strategy, Council informs and influences key stakeholders about issues and concerns affecting women, Council, and government priorities, activities and accomplishments, as well as about opportunities for improvement in addressing women's issues.

Community Liaison and Rural Outreach
Through Council members and fieldwork staff, the Advisory Council brings forward concerns of women from across Nova Scotia, with particular attention to historically disadvantaged groups. Council also partners with communities, organizations, and agencies to advance equality for women in programs and services.

Progress and Accomplishments 2006-2007

Social Inclusion

To advise government and other stakeholders on best practices, policies, and strategies for the inclusion of women in all their diversity in the development of legislation, policy and programs

The Advisory Council provided input and follow-up to a Federal-Provincial-Territorial Policy Forum on Aboriginal Women and Violence.

To examine issues and barriers experienced by women with disabilities and immigrant women, the Council held roundtables with women in communities across the province. We also released the brief *Employability of Women with Disabilities: Breaching the Disability Wall.*

One outcome from the Immigrant Women Round Table in 2006 is the development of a mentoring project for immigrant women.

The Healthy Balance Research Program identified the needs of African-Nova Scotian, First Nations and immigrant communities, and the special challenges that adults with disabilities face, through an equity reference group. Many of the group members are current or previous Council members and continue to work to include the views of women in all their diversity in the development of policies and programs to support caregivers.

Council participated on the Public Service Commission's Diversity Roundtable.

Council submitted a brief to the Minister's Advisory Committee for the Children and Family Services Act and the Adoption Act.

To increase the numbers and diversity of women in public and political life

We need more women, and women in all their diversity, in public decision-making in Nova Scotia, at the municipal, provincial, federal and First Nations orders of government.

Through the Women in Local Government Project (WILG), we worked with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM), YWCA and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations to encourage more women to participate as municipal leaders. Our role during 2006-2007 involved communicating about women's participation in local decision-making, sharing information and encouraging networking among elected women, and supporting the implementation of recommendations from the report *Untapped Resources*. The Minister spoke at a networking breakfast for women councillors at the UNSM conference in Sydney in October 2006.

The Advisory Council worked with the Tri-County Womens Centre to present a Political Skills Workshop in Yarmouth in April 2006, with a keynote speaker, a panel, and presentations. Council staff also began work with Mount Saint Vincent University on preparations for the third non-partisan Campaign School for Women held in May 2007. That agenda included journalists, campaign planners, and politicians helping participants through media relations training and campaign strategy.

The Advisory Council and the Women's Place Resource Centre in Bridgetown held an all-candidate debate during the May 2006 provincial election. The outcome was awareness of issues and informed voters.

The Advisory Council met with all three caucuses in the fall of 2006 to inform them of current priorities and projects, with positive responses from all.

The Council held a very successful lunch for business women in April, with Premier Rodney MacDonald as guest speaker. Tickets sold out and there was a lengthy waiting list. It was an excellent opportunity for women business leaders to network with each other and government leaders.

To maintain the effectiveness of the Advisory Council by increasing the visibility of Council and its members

The Advisory Council and its partners held the Agnes Dennis Lecture in October 2006, to mark Women's History Month and raise awareness about the contributions of Aboriginal women to Canada. Dr. Viola Robinson's lecture at Saint Mary's University promoted better understanding of the realities and challenges in the lives of Aboriginal women. Later in the month, the Women's Place and the Council hosted an evening with Wendy Joudry-Finnigan from the Bear River Reserve, to increase cultural awareness.

The Nova Scotia War Brides Association, Woman's Place and the Council held events to honour War Brides in November 2006. The Minister spoke on two occasions, raising awareness about the contributions and sacrifices these women made for Canada and the world.

Council staff worked with a local designer and Communications Nova Scotia to update and upgrade the website during 2006 and 2007. The more user-friendly design appeals to a broader audience, including young people. Moreover, new online library services have increased the availability of our resources to the community.

NewsBytes, a bi-weekly electronic bulletin, delivers Advisory Council news, partner and community information -- including opportunities for participation in decision-making and at community events. The bulletin's circulation has tripled in the last couple of years to more than 1,300 subscribers.

Also underway during 2006 was development of the French version of *Guide for Girls -- Guide-ressources pour filles.* Input from partners inside and outside government helped create this book for teenaged girls, containing information about work and career preparation, relationships with friends and family, money management and community involvement.

How do the lives of women in Nova Scotia compare to the lives of women elsewhere? By exchanging experiences, research and policies with colleagues in other countries, we can better understand how we fit into the world, and we can see new routes for advancing the Council's work. This year, staff partnered with researchers at a medical university in Germany on gender and health issues. In China, Council is partnering with the All-China Women's Federation to develop a policy framework for a national women's education and training system.

Council members and staff worked with the media to raise awareness about several issues during 2006-2007. For instance, interviews about the Healthy Balance Research Program educated the public about caregiving issues and work-life balance. Commentary on how women fared during the 2006 provincial election led to discussions about the importance of non-partisan campaign schools. Coverage about the availability of sexual assault services across the province launched discussions about challenges facing victims. Media requests for information about gender discrimination provided the opportunity to talk about factors affecting economic equality and security for women.

Economic Equality/Security

To make recommendations to policy and community audiences to reduce women's precarious employment and poverty and to increase opportunities for affordable housing

The Advisory Council chaired the Roundtable on Women's Economic Security during 2006-2007. The group consists of federal and provincial public servants from a cross-section of government and representatives from such organizations as the Women's Economic Equality Society, Women's Centres Connect!, Women's Employment Outreach and FemJEPP (Feminists for Just and Equitable Public Policy). The roundtable is a forum for sharing knowledge and understanding about changing social and economic circumstances and how they affect women's independence and security. In 2006, working groups looked at women's precarious employment, respite care and other issues.

The Advisory Council submitted and presented the brief *Employability of Women with Disabilities: Breaching the Disability Wall* in October 2006, to the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

Three Roundtables for Women with Disabilities in Amherst, Sydney, and Yarmouth focused on economic security and employment income. Other work that helped government and the public understand the needs of women with disabilites was the Council's April 2006 report *Women with Disabilities in Nova Scotia: A Statistical Profile.*

The *Women, Work and Care: Policy at the Crossroads Forum Report and Highlights Report* documented discussions at three sessions involving women affected by social policy, policy makers and non-government organizations interested in change.

Through a provincial working group, Council staff provided input regarding matrimonial real property for aboriginal communities. The lack of legislation on matrimonial real property on reserves is a human rights concern and creates hardship for First Nations people -- especially women. Nova Scotia is committed to working with the federal government and the Aboriginal population to find effective, fair and appropriate solutions.

The Council released a revised edition of *Money Matters,* an update on the economic situation of women in Nova Scotia.

Council staff also met with Halifax's Metro Transit to discuss employment opportunities for women in the transit field, and also to discuss women's participation in transit planning.

To continue to increase women's exposure to and participation in occupations where they remain under-represented, particularly in trades and technology

Effective partnerships with government and community-based organizations have enabled the Advisory Council to take part in expanding opportunities for women's economic well-being. We work with industry and labour and women's organizations to increase recruitment and retention of women in trades and technology occupations.

The council and the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) celebrated International Women's Day on March 8, 2007, through events in Halifax and Bridgewater, to honour the accomplishments of women in trades and technology.

Council provides ongoing advice, direction and implementation support to programs that increase women's numbers in trades and technology. Women Unlimited launched the Career-Decision-Making Program at the NSCC Lunenburg Campus in 2006. Nineteen women explored careers in science, trades and technology, through hands-on workshops, field trips, industry-based activities, work/life balance sessions and job shadowing with 33 local employers.

Through our work with Techsploration, we encourage Grade 9 students, especially young women, to expand their career options. The 2006 program launched at Pier 21 in December; it involves 23 schools, introducing hundreds of young people to career choices in the sciences, trades and technology.

Personal Safety and Freedom from Violence

To identify and recommend measures to prevent and reduce all forms of violence against women, with particular attention to First Nations women, African Nova Scotian women, immigrant women, women with disabilities, and Acadian women

Our anti-violence agenda includes representation on the Nova Scotia Working Group to address issues related to family violence in aboriginal communities. The working group has become a subcommittee of the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum Justice Committee. Council members and staff also continue to participate on three inter-agencies against family violence across the province.

The Sexual Assault Services Planning Group, in partnership with the Council, is assessing where and how services are being delivered for sexual assault survivors in Nova Scotia, with the aim of extending services. The Council raised awareness about the need for services to support survivors beyond metro. The Minister provided $12,000 toward the provincial needs assessment.

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on December 6 has become a day to remember all women who live with, or have died from violence -- established in honour of 14 young women who died at École Polytechnique in Montreal. In 2006, the Council invited speakers from Avalon Sexual Assault Centre, Transition House Association of Nova Scotia, Coverdale, and the Millbrook Family Treatment Centre to Province House, to discuss their work in this area.

Workshops on dating violence, self-esteem and communication were held at Digby Regional High School to girls in Grades 7 to 9. Council partnered with the high school and Juniper Transition House's Outreach Service.

To take part in prevention and service development activities related to domestic violence and sexual assault

We continue to distribute the often-requested *Making Changes: A Handbook for Women in Abusive Relationships.* A new chapter developed this year guides family and friends through helping victims and disclosing abuse.

Advisory Council staff are also working with partners on a family law guide for women in abusive relationships.

Council staff also participate in the Silent Witness Program, to raise community awareness about women abuse and intimate partner homicides.

Health and Well-Being

To improve women's access to health services and information by advising government and District Health Authorities about women's health issues

A train-the-trainer module on Gender and HIV/AIDS is being developed with the Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health and the AIDS Coalition.

Well Women's Clinics in rural communities are a collaborative effort involving the Advisory Council, Public Health, and local organizations such as the Women's Place in Bridgetown and local hospitals such as Soldiers Memorial Hospital in Middleton. The clinics increase the availability of PAP tests and breast examinations, and provide information about nutrition.

Council staff advised a research group working on emergency contraception and the role of pharmacists and assisted in a successful research proposal to the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation.

In partnership with the Canadian Paraplegic Association, the Department of Economic Development and the Seniors' Secretariat, Council has been working with an industrial designer to develop an accessible medical examination table.

To make evidence-based recommendations to provincial and federal governments, and to professional and community audiences about the support needs of women in caregiving and care-receiving roles

The Healthy Balance Research Program is a five-year multi-faceted study on women's unpaid caregiving, health and work/life balance. This year's work delivered several publications, a provincial forum in May, policy recommendations, and a caregiver's handbook. The Advisory Council is a lead partner in the reseach program.

Council staff is also co-chairing a respite committee comprising government and community partners. The focus is respite care for parents caring for children with disabilities.

National and international relationships further inform the Council's strategies for positive health and well-being of women. Staff extended Canadian expertise on gender and health issues to Germany's Medical University of Hanover and co-edited a collection of readings on health promotion of women.

Financial Results 2006-2007

	2006-2007 Estimate ($000's)	2006-2007 Actuals ($000's)
Gross Expenses	878	953
Net Expenses	868	834
Salaries and Employee Benefits	526	603
Funded Staff (FTEs)	8.0	7.9

Performance Measures 2006-2007

Proportion of Advisory Council Publications that Address Diversity and Social Inclusion

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, one desirable outcome is ensuring that the work of the Advisory Council addresses diversity and social inclusion.

What does the measure tell us?

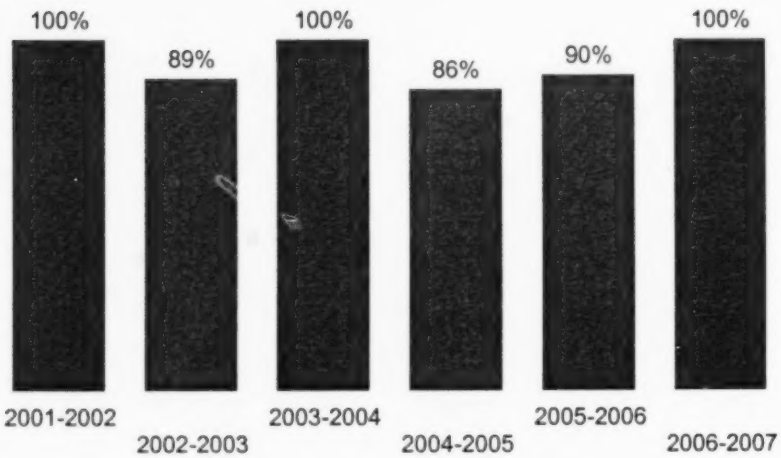
This measure is a straight-forward calculation of the proportion of all Advisory Council publications, including briefs, statistical reports, and informational reports that address diversity and social inclusion. As one of the Advisory Council's goals is to increase the participation of women in all their diversity in decisions that affect their lives, families, and communities, with particular emphasis on those who face discrimination because of race, age, language, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or various forms of family status, it behooves us to ensure that all Council publications reflect this goal.

Proportion of Advisory Council Publications that Address Diversity and Social Inclusion

2001-2002 to 2006-2007

Where are we now?

We increased our target for this measure from 75 to 90 percent this year. In four of the past six years analyzed, and in the two past years, our revised target of 90 percent was met or exceeded. In three of these six years, all publications released by the Advisory Council addressed diversity and social inclusion.



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

The proportion of all Advisory Council publications that address diversity and social inclusion met or surpassed our target in the 2006-2007 fiscal year. It is expected that we will continue to meet or exceed our target of 90 percent for the coming fiscal years.

Council Website Visits

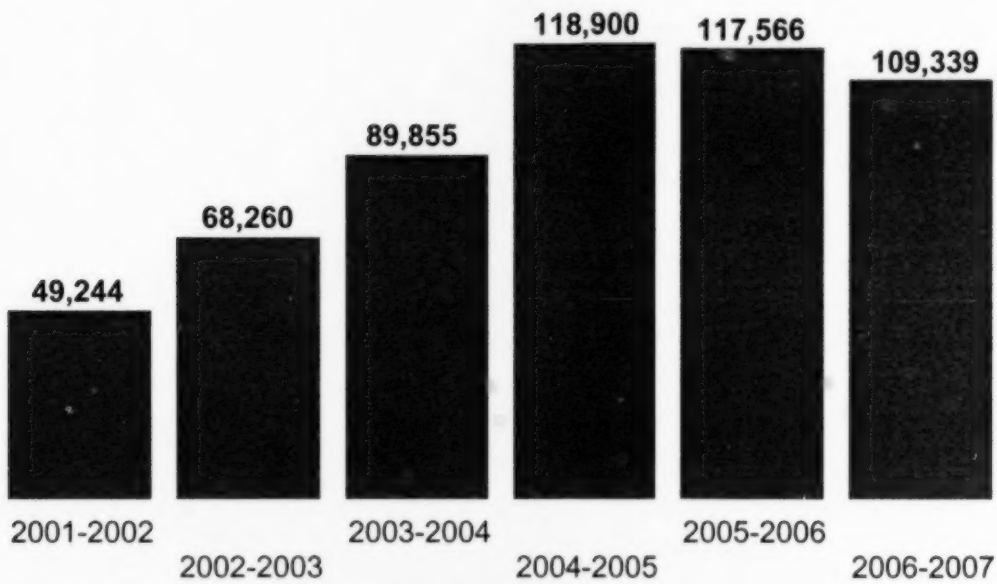
Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is an increased public awareness of Council initiatives. One measure of this outcome is tracking the public's usage of the Advisory Council's web-site.

What does the measure tell us?

Tracking the Council's website utilization gives us an idea of the popularity of the Council's work, including its briefs, statistical publications and other informational documents, which the Council is increasingly making available to the public in electronic format. Consistently high Council website usage indicates a consistently strong public interest in and demand for the Council's work.

Where are we now?

Advisory Council Web-Site Usage (website hits or pageviews)
2002-2003 to 2006-2007



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

In 2006-2007, the Advisory Council's website had 109,399 visits. While this figure showed a slight decline from the previous year, it shows an increase of about 22 percent over the 2003-04 fiscal year. As with previous years, there was considerable monthly variation in the number of people visiting the Council's website. The highest usage of the Council's website occurred in the Spring (average of 11,455 visits per month) and Fall (average of 8857 visits per month), with somewhat lower usage in the Summer (average of 7753 visits per month) and Winter (average of 8381 visits per month).

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our original target for this measure was to exceed 50,000 website visits by 2004-05. As we surpassed this target in both the 02-03 and 03-04 fiscal years, we revised our target for 2004-05 to 70,000 website visits. As this target was again surpassed by a significant margin in the 04-05 fiscal year, our target for future years increased again, to 100,000 page views. We met this target in both 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 and do not anticipate having any difficulty attaining this goal in coming years. At the end of the first quarter of the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the Advisory Council launched its newly designed website to better meet the needs of its patrons. In light of these changes, it is our hope that the use of the Advisory Council's website will continue to meet its target in future years.

Advisory Council Speaking Engagements and Public Presentations

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is an increased public awareness of Council initiatives. Another measure of this outcome is tracking the number of speaking engagements and public presentations that are requested of the Advisory Council.

What does this measure tell us?

Tracking the number of speaking engagements and public presentations that members of the public, community organizations, and other government departments and agencies request of the Advisory Council is a good way of ascertaining their awareness of the Council and ensuring that a province-wide awareness is achieved.

This measure was introduced in the 2005-2006 fiscal year. A speaking engagement tracking form was developed which allows us to record the location and topic of the presentation, the type of organization making the request, the audience size and tone, as well as a 5-point rating of how well the presentation went (1=poorly, 5=excellent).

Where are we now?

In 2005-2006, the only other year for which we have data thus far, there were a total of 16 speaking engagements requested of the Advisory Council. In the 2006-2007 fiscal year, there were a total of 22 speaking engagements, a 37% increase.

Presentations were made on a wide variety of topics to diverse audiences across the province.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

The target for this measure was originally set at 10 presentations/speaking engagements per year and then raised to 20 presentations/speaking engagements for the 2006-07 fiscal year. This target was met in 2006-2007. We do not anticipate having any difficulty meeting this target in the coming years.

Media Coverage of Council's Work

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is an increased public awareness of Council initiatives. Another measure of this outcome is the print media's coverage of Council initiatives, events, and work in general.

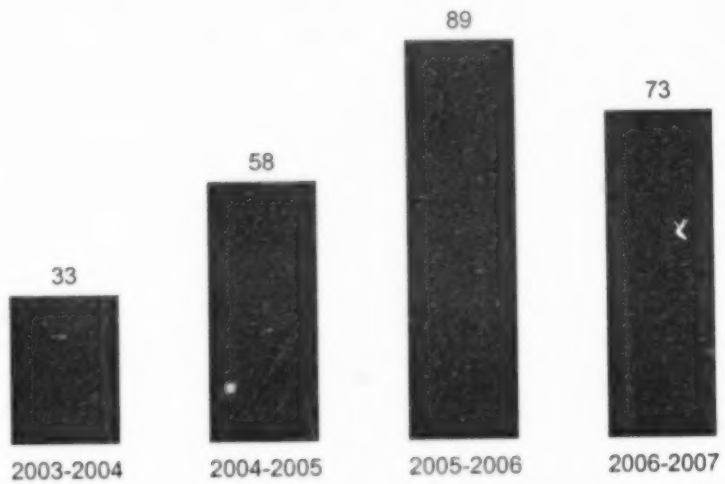
What does the measure tell us?

Tracking the print media's coverage of the Council's work provides us with a sense of the Council's public image. A consistently strong interest in the Council's work on the part of the media is consistent with a stronger public image and increased public recognition of the Council's work and initiatives.

Where are we now?

In 2006-2007 there were a total of 73 print media stories published that related to the work of the Advisory Council, up from 58 media stories in 2004-2005 but down from the 89 stories printed in 2005-2006. This total falls just slightly below our target of 75 media stories.

Print Media Coverage of Council's Work
2003-2004 to 2006-2007



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our target for this measure for 2007-2008 is 75 print media stories. We do not anticipate having any difficulty meeting this target.

Increased Numbers of NewsBytes Subscribers

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is to increase the number of subscribers to the Advisory Council's bi-weekly electronic news bulletin, "NewsBytes".

What does the measure tell us?

NewsBytes is the Advisory Council's bi-weekly electronic news bulletin which has been in existence since April of 2002. Newsbytes replaced the Council's hard-copy newsletter and aims to inform subscribers of Council news, updates, and short features on women's issues. The number of NewsBytes subscribers gives a good indication as to the public's level of interest in women's issues and is an efficient and cost-effective way of providing information to those interested in women's issues.

Where are we now?

At the end of the 2005-2006 fiscal year, there were a total of 513 Newsbytes subscribers. By the end of the 2006-2007 fiscal year, the number of subscribers had increased to 1,357. This number substantially surpasses out target of 750.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Through web-site re-design and consistent marketing, the Advisory Council plans to keep increasing its numbers of NewsBytes subscribers in the coming years.

Council Members' Self-Rating of Participation in Community

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is the sustained effectiveness of the Advisory Council which can be achieved by supporting members' active engagement in their communities to enable them to bring forward the concerns of women to relevant policy audiences.

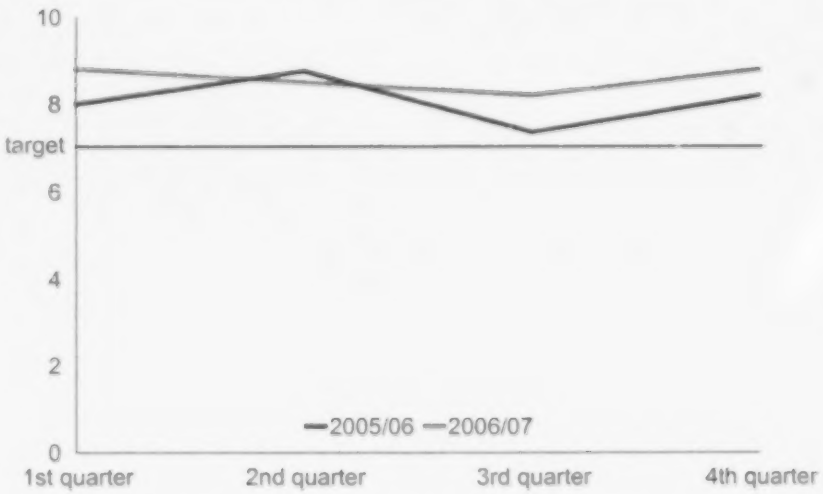
What does the measure tell us?

The Council members' self-rating of participation in the community is a quarterly administered self-rating which ranges from 1 (was not able to do any Council-related work) to 10 (did Council-related work at least once a week). Scores are averaged across all Council members for each quarter of the fiscal year. Higher scores are indicative of a more active, vibrant Council with members who are dedicating a significant amount of personal time to the concerns of women in the province and who know the needs of the women they are serving.

Where are we now?

Council member self-ratings in 2006-2007 were higher, overall, than their 2005-2006 ratings. Self ratings were higher in three out of the four quarters of the fiscal year and average self-ratings exceeded our target rating of 8.0 in all four quarters.

Average Advisory Council Member Self-Ratings
2005-2006 and 2006-2007



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Average Council member self-ratings surpassed our target in all four quarters of the 2006-2007 fiscal year. It is expected that we will continue to meet or exceed our target of 8 out of 10 for the coming fiscal years.

Number of Women's Campaign School Graduates and Political Workshop Participants

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is to increase the numbers of Nova Scotian women who obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in public and political life. This can be achieved by offering the Nova Scotia Campaign School for Women, publicizing it widely to women across the province and ensuring that diverse groups of women have information about and access to the school as well as by developing and offering educational workshops for women so that they can further develop particular political skills.

The 2006-2007 business plan indicated that the Council would sponsor three political workshops for women. In fact, one workshop for women in politics was held in Yarmouth, a half-day workshop for the Association of Municipal Administrators was held and a presentation was given to the Municipal Council of Kings County. As well, both Council members and staff participated in the work of the Women in Local Government project of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM), as follow up to the *Untapped Resources* report. This resulted in the UNSM's unanimous adoption of the recommendation that ongoing work be done to ensure that women comprise at least 30% of municipal candidates in the 2008 elections.

Further work to involve more women in electoral politics was initiated to lay the groundwork for the May, 2007 Campaign School for Women, in partnership with Mount Saint Vincent University.

What does this measure tell us?

In November of 2004, the Advisory Council developed and coordinated the first-ever non-partisan, Nova Scotia Campaign School for Women. The School, comprised of several modules, was designed to give women the practical knowledge and skills necessary for them to begin participating in the political life of the province. Modules included:

- Making the decision to run
- Securing the nomination
- Campaign ethics
- Putting together a winning team - the campaign plan
- Media Relations

- Communications Training, including one-on-one television interviews, on-the-spot interviews and three-minute prepared speech
- Campaign fund-raising and budgeting

Each time the Campaign School and related political workshops are offered, the number of graduates/participants serves as an indication that an increasing number of women in this province have the necessary skills to participate in political life.

Where are we now?

The first campaign school, held in Halifax in November of 2004, had a total of 30 graduates (25 from Nova Scotia and 5 from out-of-province) who gained invaluable knowledge and skills required to participate actively in public and political life. The second Campaign School was held in December of 2005 and graduated 28 more women, for a total of 58 graduates, thus far.

Each time the Campaign School for Women is held, it generates an increasing amount of interest at both the provincial and national level. The Commonwealth Secretariat has also expressed recent interest in sending observers to the school to determine its possible applicability and use in the Commonwealth.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

The Advisory Council will continue to refine, coordinate, and offer its Campaign School for Women. There are Campaign Schools for Women scheduled to take place in both 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. Each Campaign School graduates between 25 and 30 diverse women.

Satisfaction with Advisory Council's Recommendations, Advice and Input

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goals of promoting women's economic equality; reducing violence against women in communities, workplaces, and families; and improving the health and well-being of women and their families, a desirable outcome is that the advice, recommendations, and input that the Advisory Council makes in relation to gender, inclusion, and diversity are valued and well-utilized, by government and community partners.

What does this measure tell us?

Assessing the extent to which our government and community partners' value and utilize the advice, recommendations, and input the Advisory Council makes in relation to gender, inclusion, and diversity is a good indicator of whether the work we do, so much of which is horizontal and collaborative in nature, enhances the social policy efforts of this province.

This measure was first introduced in the 2005-2006 fiscal year. A 5-point Likert scale rating form (1=poor, 5=excellent) was developed to assess the value and level of utilization of Advisory Council advice, recommendations, and input. Government and community partners who had requested the input of the Advisory Council in social and health policy, research, and community initiatives were asked to provide a rating.

Where are we now?

In the 2005-2006 fiscal year, the average rating received for this measure was 4.58. For the 2006-2007 fiscal year, ratings received included those for the following projects:

- Women Unlimited
- WEE Society Projects
- Techsploration (Expansion Committee and Program Advisory Committee)
- Aboriginal Women and Family Violence
- Domestic Violence in First Nations
- Roundtables for Women with Disabilities
- Respite Committee

Ratings received ranged from 4 to 5 on the 5-point scale. Overall, the average rating received was 4.90* which surpassed last year's average of 4.58 and well surpassed our target of 3.5 out of 5.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

It is anticipated that we will continue to meet or surpass our target of 3.5 in coming fiscal years.

* Please note that this same measure is used under two of our agency's goals and the results above combine the results across goals rather than separately for each goal.

Level of Utilization and Public Support for Advisory Council Publications

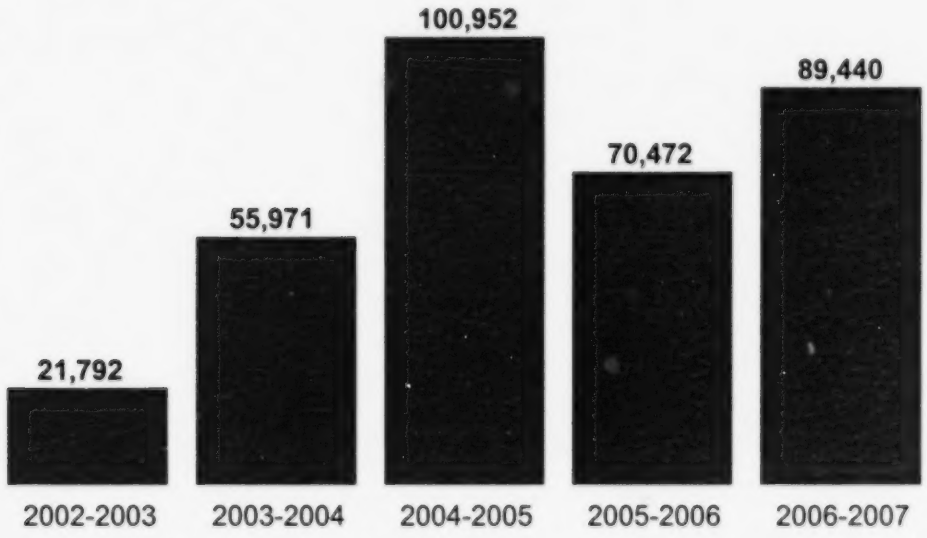
Under the Advisory Council's strategic goals of promoting women's economic equality; reducing violence against women in communities, workplaces, and families; and improving the health and well-being of women and their families, a desirable outcome is the strong utilization of policy-based research and informational resources developed and disseminated by the Advisory Council.

What does the measure tell us?

Tracking the public's use of Council publications, both printed copy and electronic format, gives us an idea of the popularity of the Council's published work, including its briefs, statistical publications and other informational documents. Consistently high demand for Council publications indicates the public's interest in and satisfaction with the published work of the Council, analogous to the media's use of circulation figures. Tracking the distribution by publication allows us to know how popular particular publications are.

Where are we now?

Advisory Council Publications (PDF files)
Downloaded from Web-Site, 2002-2003 to 2006-2007

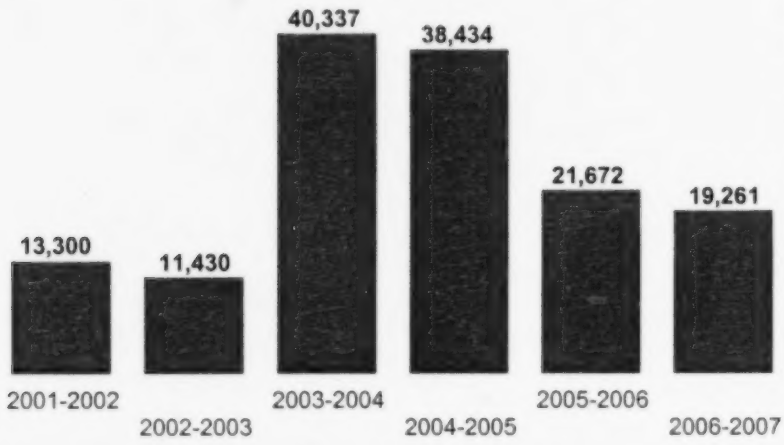


Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

As can be seen in the figure immediately above, the overall number of publications downloaded from the Advisory Council's website increased by 27% from 2005-2006 to 2006-2007. In total, 89,440 publications (PDF files) were downloaded from the Council's website in 2006-2007 with an additional 6,795 hard copies of publications distributed to meet the requests of the public.

Distribution of *Making Changes* (PDF and Hard Copy)

2001-2002 to 2006-2007



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

If you specifically examine the distribution of the Advisory Council's most popular publication, *Making Changes: A Book for Women in Abusive Relationships*, a similar distribution pattern as above emerges with clear increases coinciding with releases of revised editions of the publication.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

The importance of the Council's website in improving the public's access to council information can hardly be over-stated. The number of policy/research as well as informational/educational publications downloaded, for instance, far exceeds the number the Council could typically afford to make available in hard copy. Thus our information and outreach capacity is enhanced in a highly cost-effective manner.

With a revised and expanded edition of *Making Changes* scheduled to be released in 2007, along with the release of several new publications and a substantial re-design of our website, it is expected that the number of PDF downloads will continue to increase in the coming year.

Publications and Submissions

Comments on the Children and Family Services Act and the Adoption Information Act – October 2006, to the Minister's Advisory Committee

Employability of Women with Disabilities – September 2006

A brief to the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities

Fact Sheet on Aboriginal Women – May 2006

Fact Sheet on Violence Against Women – November 2006

Finding a Healthy Balance: Research, Policy and Practice on Women's Unpaid Caregiving in Nova Scotia, May 2-3, 2006 Forum Proceedings – September 2006

Immigrant Women's Round Table Report – July 2006

Making Changes (Fourth Edition) – March 2006

Matrimonial Real Property on Reserves

Money Matters (Revised Edition) – May 2006

2nd Nova Scotia Immigrant Women's Roundtable -- A Summary Report

Women with Disabilities in Nova Scotia: A Statistical Profile – April 2006

Women, Work and Care Highlights Report – June 2006

Women, Work and Care: Policy at the Crossroads Forum Report – July 2006

Working With Women -- Council Highlights Report 2005-2006

Council Members

Sonja Power, Chair (to April 2007) – Fundy Region
Linda Carvery – Central Region
Mary Elizabeth (Liz) Chisholm – Highland Region
Ebi Cocodia – Central Region
Jean d'Entrement – South Shore Region
Maria deVries – South Shore Region
Shelley Goodwin – South Shore Region
Anne Kelly – Central Region
Patricia LeBlanc – Cape Breton Region
Holly Meuse – Valley Region
Doreen Paris – Highland Region
Rita Warner – Cape Breton Region